

ment of a State psychopathic hospital, aside from those of reconstruction and rehabilitation, is attested by letters which have been received from physicians working in the field of psychiatry and neurology and many other citizens since the bill was introduced into the Legislature.

Physicians all over the State should do everything possible to secure the passage of this important measure through communicating with the Governor, their representatives in the Legislature and the Board of Control.

#### THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY HOSPITAL.

In another column will be found a description of the Los Angeles County Hospital by its superintendent, Norman R. Martin. It is an institution of which the medical profession and other citizens of Los Angeles County may well be proud.

It is to be regretted that an editorial recently in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*<sup>1</sup> reflected seriously on the professional standing and internships of this hospital.

Fuller investigation and better acquaintance with the facts of the case would doubtless have led to a very different judgment.

The situation is very accurately summarized by Dr. Martin as follows: "The average daily population of the Los Angeles County Hospital for the past fiscal year was 1008 patients. It is the only public hospital serving the City and County of Los Angeles with a civilian population of approximately one million people. It treats every disease except smallpox. Since war was declared it has contributed 118 doctors and nurses to the service, this including the Medical Director, Assistant Medical Director, and Superintendent of Nurses. Our internship covers a period of eighteen months and the United States Government drafted our internes in ten to twelve months, making a very difficult situation to meet. The civilian sick had to be taken care of, regardless of these heavy drafts on our professional department, and it was necessary to make temporary appointments from among candidates for civil service examination at the time."

Examinations for internes in the Los Angeles County Hospital are conducted by the Civil Service Commission of the County at thirteen points in the United States, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Cincinnati, New York, Boston, Minneapolis, Omaha and San Francisco. Under the California State law, osteopaths may qualify for the physicians' and surgeons' license by due examination, and are then entitled to the same rights and privileges as regular physicians. It is therefore not in the power of the hospital to exclude osteopaths from internship, provided they have been certified as eligible by the Civil Service Commission. If fault there be, it lies with the medical practice act as enacted by the Legislature.

In addition to these and other minor circumstances, altogether tending to make the temporary situation in the Los Angeles County Hospital most trying, is to be reckoned the influenza epi-

demic. It was absolutely necessary to care for these added patients at once in the best manner possible. It was absolutely impossible to preserve the exact standards of normal peace times.

Instead of the hospital deserving censure, it deserves full credit for maintaining efficient professional work and for meeting abnormal and excessive emergencies, both in spite of heavy and unusual handicaps.

#### EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Do not fail to read Dr. Lengfeld's thoughtful and practical reviews each month in the Department of Pharmacy and Chemistry. His warning against "a union suit which fits everybody" is most timely.

In startling contrast to the present-day scientific nurture of boyhood, the Boy Scout movement, etc., is to be noted a Connecticut state law, Revision of 1702, aimed at the small boy on a hot Sunday afternoon. "No person . . . shall swim in the water in the evening preceding the Lord's Day or any part of the said day or the evening following, . . . nor use any game, sport, play or recreation on the Lord's Day. Penalty 10 shillings."

All doctors not now licensed in California, who are, or have been in military service, and expect to locate in California, should read the letter in this issue of the *JOURNAL* from Dr. Pinkham, secretary of the State Board of Medical Examiners.

Our confreres, the dentists, are working for the legal establishment of a system of dental nurses, who would be a powerful influence in the development of preventive dentistry and early thorough oral hygiene. Trained dental nurses would perform simple prophylactic operations in schools, public institutions and dental offices under the personal direction of registered dentists. The idea is strongly to be commended.

The United Fruit Company, which operates a line of fast fruit steamers between Atlantic Coast ports, West Indies and Central America, has found as a matter of business experience that it pays to conduct a modern well-equipped medical department. Twenty-three physicians are engaged in this work and their activities cover the sanitation of ships, terminals, and company industrial developments, the care of sick and injured employees, and the provision of medical service to outside persons where other physicians are not available. Perhaps their most important duty lies in the realm of disease prevention. This is naturally a matter of considerable importance in the tropical regions where the company operates. That it pays is shown by the fact that the percentage of cost of operating the medical department to the total operating cost of the tropical divisions was 0.87 in the year just finished.

<sup>1</sup> Jour. A. M. A., Jan. 4, 1914.